CHAPTER 1

THE PEOPLE AND THEIR VILLAGE

000 WINTER had begun. The first snow of the year had fallen. It covered the muddy streets of the village, softening the nakedness of the fruit trees which stood lonely in the bare yards. The wind from Mount Vitosha came whistling down the empty lanes, sending both man and beast to seek protection and warmth. The animals huddled in their thatched folds and shelters; the women and children crowded on the little stools near the fireplace at home. The fall sowing of wheat was in. The fields, wind-swept and snow-laden, were deserted, seemingly forgotten by the men and women who had spent so much time with them during the past months.

512 One ordinary day followed another. Every morning the water
● 231 buffalo had to be groomed until they shone; the oxen had to be cleaned after the night in the dirty stall; these, as well as the sheep, had to be fed. Usually the animals received their meager rations before ten
[291] o'clock. Shortly thereafter the men, wearing their dirty-gray sheepskin coats, their brimless lambskin hats, and their pigskin sandals, congregated at the taverns to relieve the monotony of their daily routine. At noon they plodded home to a lunch of beans, looked after the cattle once more, and gave commands to their womenfolk. The rest of the day was spent at the taverns in drinking and talking, interspersed with long, easy silences. After the evening meal, the cattle were fed again. Then the men dropped off to sleep along with the rest of the household.

181 The winds and enforced idleness of winter were not alone respon-
829 sible for the apparent sluggishness on every hand. Slow motion was characteristic of Dragalevtsy life in general, but especially of the bodily movements of the people. *Ima vreme* (there's plenty of time) was either a practical philosophical tenet which explained their lack of hurry or else it was an expression frequently used to rationalize their casual manner. I never saw a peasant with a watch.

2: Sanders E-5 (no date) 1949 EE1 Bulgaria EE1

out of hand. The fact that not all patrons of the tavern drank liquor was shown by the comment of one of the villagers:

"I come to the tavern chiefly for the newspaper. I have a strong will, drink little, and know when to stop. The young men when starting the temperance association asked me to be president but I couldn't give up coming here for the newspaper. The small coffee house across the square has only room enough for five or six people and there's no point in going there. Many blame me for going to the tavern, but they have no interest in finding out what is going on in the world."

One advantage of visiting the tavern included the announcements that the town crier always made there as well as out in the square.

The tavern keepers, however, had no illusions about their standing in the public estimation. All of them were of the same peasant stock as their patrons, but had sold some of their land in order to set themselves up in business.

"If the people of the village took a vote, the majority would favor shutting up all the taverns. The people don't like us," was the tart comment of one tavern keeper. This dislike sprang from the indebtedness of so many people to the tavern keepers, as well as from the strong feeling many have toward the social consequences of excessive alcoholism.

There were, however, a number of men who had to miss the morning session at the Dragalevtsy *kruchmi*. They were the milkmen. Each morning while it was still dark eight tiny donkeys left their yards, pattered down the slope just outside the village, and followed the straight gravel road five miles to Sofia. They were accompanied by their prodding masters who kept an eye on the two or three large cans of milk which had been strapped onto the wooden saddles. These donkeys long ago learned to swallow any pride they might have had, for each morning, with monotonous regularity, they were overtaken by the high two-wheeled horse-drawn milk carts used by the remaining thirty Dragalevtsy milkmen. Once in Sofia, the majority of the milkmen covered their routes, knocking at the doors of the regular customers and waiting patiently for a container into which to pour a quart or so of milk from the large cans. The round completed, most of the milkmen began at once to retrace the long uphill journey from the city's outskirts to the village.

2: Sanders E-5 (no date) 1949 EE1 Bulgaria EE1

trees above, pitiful reminders of a once-proud forest. A hurried mountain stream called Dragalevtsy River passes through the village and, in doing so, turns the grist mills and assists with the washing of clothes. 133

A mile to the east of Dragalevtsy is Simeonovo, a settlement decidedly run-down at the heel. It was here that I spent a busy morning trying to explain to two villagers that the earth was really global rather than flat. Farther on around the shoulder of the mountain is Bistritsa, where the people are said to sing as they dance the *horo:* 186

> "There is no city more populous than Sofia,
> There is no river more majestic than the Iskar,
> There is no mountain more lofty than Vitosha."

This is an accurate illustration of ethnocentrism, or the belief prevalent among most people that they, and they alone, are the center of the universe and God's chosen children.

My usual approach to the village was across the unfenced fields and up the mountainside. Sometimes I came along the dull road from Sofia. By either way, the great mountain, changing color from hour to hour, was a rest to the eyes. The way across the fields led one gently into the village through patches of vegetable gardens and clumps of overhanging fruit trees. Upon entering the village from the direction of Sofia I passed the cemetery and then was closed in between whitewashed walls which lined the curving streets. Animals also felt much at home in these streets. Just before sunset the village goatherd headed the two hundred animals in his care toward the settlement. Into Renaissance Square they trotted, a capering mass of gray, black, and white. At each street several goats detached themselves from the rest to run unguided into their respective dwellings. The same scene occurred when the pigs came squealing home. At other times of day peasant girls passed by carrying washing to be pounded on rocks and dipped into the icy water of Dragalevtsy River. Hikers, many of them, lounged around Bai Penko's, or tramped through the streets obviously amused at the manners of the peasants. 631 [231] ●

Few things were as dependent upon the weather as the state of the village streets: muddy beyond description in the autumn and spring, 132

formation as to wash days: "We wash twice a week: on Monday and Wednesday, or on Wednesday and Saturday."

Many of the yards still had the threshing floor, reminiscent of Old Testament days. This could be located by a forlorn post which seemed to be serving no useful purpose. In the fall great quantities of drying wool hung from the clotheslines; and a little later the family piled in the yard the winter supply of wood from the forest.

The eaves of the house, deep as they were, sheltered such things as strings of drying peppers and ears of corn; milk utensils hung beneath them practically the year round; even the scythes and wooden hayforks found frequent lodging there. Storks nested in the trees and chimneys. With the coming of the warmer weather the sheep left their folds in the yards for the pastures, and the shepherd took with him his wattled shelter, which he moved on sleds across the grassy meadows.

[789] In many yards a heavy, large-wheeled wagon stood near the primitive sheds for the animals and the ever-present strawstack. If the peasants were unusually superstitious, there would be dabs of blue paint on the wagon to keep the Evil Eye away. When the weather was nice there were usually children at play in the yard. Upon seeing a visitor they added their lusty shouts to the ominous barking of the dogs. They chased the dogs away from the gate by throwing sticks and stones at them, and at the same time warned the visitor to be on the alert. Far too often the dogs sneaked up behind to nip an ankle of the unsuspecting visitor.

The yards had few flowers, because chickens of a nondescript variety pecked freely throughout the premises. One or two scraggly trees, from which the children shook most of the fruit before it had time to ripen, stood in a corner wistfully seeking to give a touch of beauty to the scene. In the spring the blossoms of such trees made the village bright, but when the fruit and leaves were gone the bare, black skeletons of the trees fitted in only too well with the poverty and sternness of village life. Poor land, inefficiently tilled, contributed to this poverty. Although the peasants worked hard in their fields, they had little cash on hand after selling their crops and paying their debts. Home improvements were postponed from year to year but the hard work kept on just the same.

2:Sanders E-5 (no date) 1949 EE1 Bulgaria EE1

42

CHAPTER III

LAND, LABOR, AND MONEY

A PEASANT'S life in spring and summer centered around the narrow strips of earth which surrounded the village. If the scene of labor was distant from the village, the tired workers who had been at their tasks since sunup often spent the night in the field rather than trudge the long way back home. In the middle of the morning, at noon, and again in midafternoon, the toilers stopped long enough for food, sometimes only bread and salt, and a little sleep. The burning noonday sun sifted through the leaves of the solitary tree beneath which the people sprawled. Fragile rays danced upon tired faces, old-fashioned costumes, a hand raised to brush away a fly, and oxen chewing lazily. Like animals the peasants worked, like animals they slept; but when harvest time brought an end to their toil they experienced the joyous satisfaction of work well done.

The average farm was about eighteen acres in size and was composed of sixteen separate and widely scattered strips. (See Table 10, Appendix I.) This land sold for a comparatively high figure because of its nearness to Sofia, but not because of any superior quality. In fact, most of the soil was sandy and gravelly, with a mixture of heavy clay.

In addition to a house in the village and his land, the peasant also owned a few animals and agricultural implements. The work animals numbered fewer than two for an eighteen-acre holding, and the plow was the only large implement found on every farm. More than any other joint operation, plowing had the flavor of an antique ritual. At dawn a slow procession moved from the village. The distant Balkan range loomed vaguely blue far across the Sofia plain, and the golden dome of Alexander Nevsky Cathedral in Sofia shone in the thin, clear light of morning. Behind the village, the slopes of

2: Sanders E-5 (no date) 1949 EEl Bulgaria EEl

Vitosha and snow-covered Cherni Vruh, its peak, looked raw and wild. Against this background a trio of woman, ox, and man was repeated over and over as the households fell into line. The woman came first, leading the moon-eyed oxen which drew the crude wagon with the wooden plow inside. Behind them walked the man who was to guide the plow. He carried a long staff to poke the oxen when they grew sluggish at their task. With the stately pace set by the animals, the peasants walked as gravely through the hush of early morning as though they were moving to some pagan altar rising in the dewy fields. Time slipped back for me countless centuries when I saw the first spring plowing, for small boys had hung the oxen with garlands as though these animals had been meant for sacrifice.

As the days passed, this picture had its variations. Black buffalo, with a cruel crocodile look on their faces, sometimes replaced the oxen; occasionally the woman was busy about something else and the man plowed alone. If the beasts got off the track, a flood of abusive language burst forth from the exasperated peasant. The sound of the language and the pitch of the voice were even more effective than the meaning. Not only in Dragalevtsy but all over Bulgaria, slowly and laboriously the heavy earth was broken with endless patience, for almost three-fourths of the plows had wooden shares, and oxen outnumbered horses four to one.

After the seed was in the ground the peasants left the responsibility mainly to God, but partly to the field policeman and his routine patrols. To ensure God's benevolence the village had a special day for a religious procession through the fields: the first Thursday after St. George's Day (May 6). Once the constant beating of the church bell coming from a strange direction attracted my attention to a spot about one mile east of the village. There was Father Sava, the priest, in his official regalia, accompanied by several boys carrying the church cross, the bell, a flag, and large icons. From forty to fifty villagers followed in a winding line. The procession stopped to pray for rain in several places where there had been insufficient rainfall. Later I learned that on one occasion the party had climbed almost to the top of Vitosha in order to fulfill to the letter their mission of encircling all of the fields owned by the Dragalevtsy people.

2: Sanders E-5 (no date) 1949 EE1 Bulgaria EE1

the shoulder. In late July harvesters came from other villages to help at least one-third of the families (the others harvested their own grain) to cut the grain with sickles and place the stalks in little piles. An old man, expert through years of practice, then made up the sheaves by tying together a bundle of stalks with the longest stalks taken from a previous sheaf. He used a round, pointed stick about fourteen inches long to make the grain compact and to tie the knot ingeniously.

Most of the grain was threshed by the hoofs of animals, usually horses, on the packed, earthen threshing floors near the house. The Karakachani, a band of Wallachians from the village of Yakoruda in the Rhodope Mountains, brought about fifty horses to the village at threshingtime. A peasant paid the equivalent of a dollar a day for the service of a team. The grain was placed in the center of the floor, near a pole to which the animals were hitched. Around and around the pole the horses walked until the rope's length was used up, whereupon they reversed their direction. Much grain was threshed by the machine owned by some of the wealthier men of the village, which was beginning to supplant the old-fashioned threshing floors. Some of the families still winnowed the grain by tossing it in the face of a stiff breeze, but many others had access to a separating machine in the neighborhood.

But this *smes,* or wheat and rye mixture, was not the only crop raised. Quite a few of the homes had garden patches, either in the yard or on the edge of the village, where peppers, mealy potatoes, cabbages, and tomatoes were grown. The white beans from Dragalevtsy were said to be the best in this part of Bulgaria.

Some families grew sunflowers in order to sell the seeds for oil. Pumpkins from the cornfields were prized for use in a soggy pumpkin pie called *banitsa.* Fruit raising was decidedly underdeveloped, but the trees that were properly cared for produced very well. Straw for the animals was frequently borrowed or purchased from the wealthier peasants who had a surplus from the threshing.

The crop second in importance to *smes,* however, was corn. Of considerable interest were the groups of women who hoed the cornfield first in one direction, and a week later in a different direction. Varying in number from three to fifteen, these groups did

2: Sanders E-5 (no date) 1949 EEl Bulgaria EEl

231
407

"Plowing had the flavor of an antique ritual." *See page 42.*

243

". . . harvesters . . . cut the grain with sickles, and placed the stalks in little piles." *See page 44.*

[Facing p. 48]

2:Sanders E-5 (no date) 1949 EE1 Bulgaria EE1

TABLE 9

DRAFT ANIMALS OWNED BY DRAGALEVTSY FARMERS, CENSUS, 1926

SIZE OF FARM IN DECARES	HORSES	OXEN	COWS*	WATER-BUFFALO	TOTAL
0- 10	7	0	0	0	7
10- 20	1	4	2	0	7
20- 30	8	10	5	5	28
30- 40	7	11	5	6	29
40- 50	8	16	5	0	29
50- 60	9	32	4	4	49
60- 70	7	27	3	5	42
70- 80	12	20	4	3	39
80- 90	3	6	0	4	13
90-100	5	11	0	0	16
100-150	41	60	6	14	121
150-200	14	16	0	11	41
200-300	5	0	0	6	11
Total	127	213	34	58	432

* Cows includes buffalo cows.

TABLE 10

FARM MACHINERY OWNED BY DRAGALEVTSY PEASANTS, CENSUS OF 1926
(EXCLUDING MONASTERY FARM)

TYPE OF IMPLEMENT OR MACHINE	NUMBER OWNED BY ALL 232 FARMERS
Wooden plow	176
Plows with wheels	157
Metal plows without wheels	5
Harrows	1
Rollers	13
Planters	2
Hay rake	1
Winnowing machines	57
Cream separator	1
Honey separator	1
Others	7

231 The development of cocoon production is remarkable

	in thousands leva
1938	99.391
1939	109.140
1940	135.134

Domestic animals (big)

horses	531.519
mules	36.648
donkeys	180.695
cattle of the bovine genus	1.497.624
black buffaloes	374.977
Total	2.621.463

This represents 2.04 heads per household. The Government endeavors to increase and improve the breed.

Domestic animals (small)

sheep	8.839.492	
goats	913.088	
swine	901.976	
Total	10.654.556	or 8.3 heads per household.

235

Domestic Fowl

hens and rousters	11.813.579	
geese and ganders	303.616	
turkeys	333.860	
ducks	321.685	
Total	12.772.740	or 9.95 per ordinary household.

239 The increasing fowl and eggs export is an indication of the country's improved poultry farming:

Exported live hens:

	Number	*1000 leva*
1936	293.204	10.426
1937	798.694	27,602
1938	883.378	29.836

Exported dressed domestic fowl:

	Metr. tons	*1000 leva*
1930	872	38.265
1932	2.248	84.248
1934	2.934	86.288
1936	4.367	145.129
1937	5.385	168.762

fold, and its market value fourfold which would render the execution of this plan profitable. In south Bulgaria two crops instead of one could be grown annually on irrigated land which moreover would be safeguarded against drought The Ministry of public works also contemplates the harnessing of the river Ossem in north Bulgaria. that some 42,000 hectares may be irrigated in the region of Lovets. This scheme would render available hydraulic energy to the amount of 38,000 H. P. which could be utilised for pumping water from the Danube and in order to water certain parts of the Danubian plain. A smaller scheme, that of bringing about 6000 hectares under irrigation near Nevrokop, in south western Bulgaria, by utilising the river Mesta is also receiving attention and will be carried out in the near future. From a close study of the data collected, it would appear that the irrigation of south Bulgaria is quite feasible and economically sound. The difficulty which stands in the way is the remuneration of the capital invested in the undertaking which could be secured under the present circumstances only by payment in kind, a consideration which is likely to discourage would-be promoters.

Concerning irrigation and water-adduction plans, it would be pertinent to mention the efforts which have been made to supply the waterless area of the Deli Orman in north-eastern Bulgaria with a supply of water. In this area of some 600 square klm. wholly devoid of springs and rivers, a network of water mains has been recently laid in order to supply some 569 villages with water, a considerable achievement in view of the financial stress in which the country finds itself. A similar noteworthy work was the adduction of water from the Rila mountains to Sofia, a distance of 82 klm. at a cost of 740 million leva completed in 1933; the difference of altitude being utilised to generate electric energy of 15,000 H. P.

Cattle raising and aviculture are fairly well developed, eggs figuring after tobacco as the second item on the list

of exports as regards value. According to the census of 1926, the livestock population was composed as follows:

		Per 1000 hectares	Per 1000 habitants
Horses.	482,180	46,75	87·94
Asses & mules .	212,371	20·59	38·74
Horned cattle. .	2,265,657	219·65	413·20
Sheep	8,739,769	847·32	1,593·94
Goats	1,260,647	122·22	229·91
Pigs	1,002,089	97·14	182·76
Farm birds. . .	10,117,874	980,94	1,945·28

The large number of sheep are mainly kept for their wool; the consumption of which amounts to 2.3 kg. per head annually, owing to the fact that the peasantry spin and weave their own clothing from this wool. The local supply does not suffice and about 2 million kg. of foreign wool and 300,000 kg. of woollen yarn are annually imported. Successful attempts have been made to cross the local breed of ewes with Hungarian rams and it is said that the weight of the fleeces of the cross-bred sheep weigh one to two kg more than the average weight of 2.3 kg. of the native sheep, and that the quality of the wool is superior, fetching 20 to 30 leva per kg. more than that of the local breed. In 1934 the amount of wool produced reached 11,892,421 kg.

The value of the above head of cattle was estimated at 10,000 to 12,000 million leva at the end of 1934 and the annual income derived was computed at 5,800 million leva, this last figure being made up of the following items:

Milk. . .	600	million	litres	at 4 leva	=	2,400,000,000 leva
Meat. . .	220	»	kg.	» 10 »	=	2,200,000,000 »
Wool . .	10·5	»	»	» 40 »	=	420,000,000 »
Hides . .	20	»	»	» 20 »	=	400,000,000 »
Eggs . .	508	»	at 0·80 leva each		=	400,000,000 »

The value of the livestock can not he assessed merely by the income which is directly derived from it as it

231 is also employed almost exclusively for ploughing and as draught animals, their manure being also used to fertitise the fields.

235 439 The export of eggs has been steadily diminishing owing to the poverty of the peasantry who can not provide for the proper feeding of ther farm birds, exports of poultry, however, have maintained themselves as may be seen from the following figures:

	1932		1933		1934	
	Quantity kg.	Value in million leva	Quantity kg.	Value in million leva	Quantity kg.	Value in million leva
Eggs. . . .	18 804,000	624	15,670,000	457	14,534,000	341
Live poultry	1,103,0?7	47	1,089,766	34	1,040,146	34
Poultry in cold storage	1,831,000	73	1,640,030	48	2,689,116	80

231 439 The export of cattle is very limited, only 2067 horned cattle and 3700 sheep, valued respectivery at 10 and 3·7 million leva having been exported in 1932. Efforts are actually being made to export bacon to England, and the few trial consignments sent are reported to have been successfully marketed. Certain varieties of cheese much appreciated in the Near East continue to be exported to that part of the world to the extent of 1,202 tons, worth 35 million leva in 1934.

246 The scarcity of fodder militates against a rational development of the cattle raising and dairy industries. The government is making strenuous efforts to increase the area of artificial prairies (32,000 hectares in 1934) and foster the cultivation of clover etc, but so far little headway has been made owing to the shortage of land. The annual supply of fodder is computed at 4800 million kg., when as much as 12,000 millions are necessary. In 1932 592,000 hectares were planted with hay and grass as against 649,000 hectares in 1934, of which 281,000 hectares were described as natural prairies. The most easy solution of

the problem is the utilisation of the fields lying fallow by sowing them with clover and similar plants, and this is being increasingly done, thus in 1932 the total arable land lying fallow had decreased to 434,000 hectares from 665,000 in 1910.

Sericulture too was once another promising branch of agriculture, as may be gauged by the fact that as many as 4600 hectares were planted with mulberry trees (1932) on the leaves of which the silkworms are fed. Unfortunately the decline in prices has discouraged production. In 1935 1,456,924 kg. of silk cocoons were produced all of which were bought up by the local silk weaving workshops. In order to protect the industry, a tax of 600 leva per kg. is levied on artificial silk produced in Bulgaria.

Apiculture is another side line in which farmers take a live interest. There are as many as 257,672 beehives in the country, the production of honey having attained in 1933 2,392,000 kg. and that of wax 114,399.

However persevering and laudable may be the efforts of the Bulgarian people to extricate themselves from their difficult position, these can only be crowned with success if markets can be found for their produce. France and Italy, despite their efforts to solve the difficulties facing the Danubian States can do little to assist them, for from the agricultural point of view both these States are practically self-sufficing, and they even antagonise Bulgaria as purveyors of fruit, poultry and eggs in the markets of Central Europe. England and Germany alone can help. The former country sells three to four times as much as she buys from Bulgaria, and it would not only be a matter of fairness, but even of foresight if she allowed a broader access to her markets to Bulgarian produce, if the Bulgarian market is not to be definitely lost to British manufacturers. Germany on the other hand is in the throes of an ever-

342 and the stables; in the mountains there are usually structures with many stories. Formerly the windows used to have wooden sashes that ran along a groove and that one could slide to the side, in place of window
262 panes. The style of life is simple; in the country the herders were often contented with sour milk, and the farmers with maize and millet beer.
● 231 The raising of livestock specializes in cattle, sheep, and goats, and
[221] takes place in the form of a migratory herding system, which commutes back and forth between the mountains in the summer and the plains
241 in the winter. The agriculture produces wheat, maize, barley, and rye, and in the temperate, nay, even hot, South, it cultivates rice, cotton, and sesame; from here, too, come the olive trees, the citrous
412 trees, and the chestnut trees. The hand mill is mostly used only for salt, other kinds of primitive tools have scarcely been preserved. The threshing sled (Figure 9)* came from the Orient; it is made of hard planks that have been bent upward at the front and into which sharp-edged fire-stones have been forced. When it is in use it is weighted down enough by the stones and by the weight of the leader to be able to press out the ears of grain. The rattle board (Figure 15)* has its counterparts all over ancient Europe. The sawing frame of the wandering wood cutters is an original invention. It includes a box filled with stones which is fastened by two rods and revolves around a horizontal axis, so that by its weight it supports the backward movement of the
291 saw. Through the universal joy in colors and in ornaments the national dress displays a great deal of variety. The basic elements of the men's clothing are a long, rough shirt with a wide cut which is embroidered with colored wool along the chest opening and along the shoulder; cloth or leather trousers, pleated in the Turkish manner in the east, in the west evenly tight-fitting, with a long woollen waistband; and legging-like calf cloths, as well as sandals; a sleeveless jacket or coat-like upper garment with wool trimmings and laces; a sheep's fur or hooded mantle; a dark and low lambskin cap. The women wear blouses with embroidered and crocheted ornamentation, skirts with belts, firmly woven, embroidered apron skirts, sleeveless vests or sleeve jackets, kerchiefs, headdresses and garlands around their fore-
302 heads with fringe bands covered with coins and hanging far down. The
301 girls wear their hair in from 20 to 30 tresses which are held together just below shoulder level by means of chains or buckles with silver coins and pearls, and which, at the end, are gathered together into one single tress (Figure 1). They also have costly ornaments of little gold and silver plates, as well as of filigree work for which the threads were formerly often taken from ancient coins.

*[See 1: Karutz, E1 Europe, Cat. 116, p. 59a --- Analyst]

9:Megas 1,B-5,4 (no date) 1951 EH1 Greece
Bulgaria EE1

entrance is covered by a wide wooden roof, resulting from the influence of the neighbouring houses of Sredna Gora. This village originated from an old Turkish farm estate (Zlatev, p. 97). 342

The same arrangement of space is also shown in the agricultural house of the village Sapantsi in the same area, and as for the outer picture there is no difference from the houses of Thrace (Fig. 40)(1).

The village house presents the same disposition in the whole of Western Bulgaria but the floor is usually here at a hight of

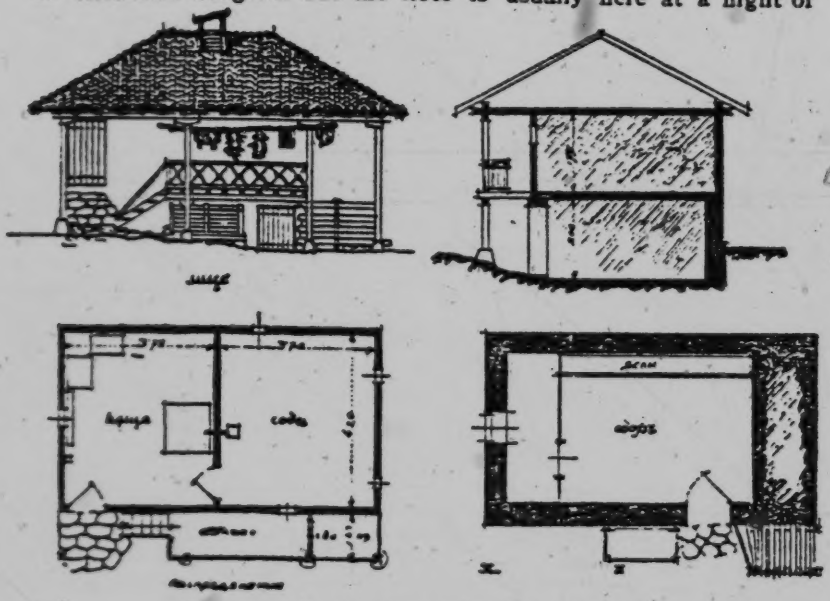

Fig. 41 House in Zianozéne, district of Berkov
Zlatev, Bălg. kăšta fig. 84)

1-1.20 metres from ground level and has under it a basement, excavated to a depth of one metre into the earth, and it is used for the stabling of cattle. [231]

1) Evidently, in older days, the houses of the poorer inhabitants of Sofia did not differ from the huts of the villagers. «The low doors of the Christian and Jewish houses of Sofia, says Jirecek (op. cit. p. 163), caused surprise to the travellers of the 16th and 17th centuries, who knew the reason for it: these houses were built so that the mounted Turkish bands would not use them as billets on their way to Hungary» (See G. Megas, Θρακ. Οικήσεις pp. 23-26).

Bulgaria EE1
Slavic Peoples E16
Serbs EF6

The typical form is shown by a house of the village of Zianozene of the Berkof district, built in 1890 (Fig. 41) «In these areas», says Zlatev (p. 98), «southward and northward of the Haimos, in the plain or even in the mountains, this house is the normal type used. The portico here appears in various forms and positions, depending on the construction, which is here primitive and without any particular sense of shape». Part of the space under the portico has been enclosed with oak-tree boards and it is used as a pig-sty. The walls of the ground-floor are made of stone, and those of the upper floor of daubed wicker-work (Bulg.: pletarka). The floor of the upper storey is made of oak planks, roughly planed, and plastered with a thick layer of clay. Windows are few and small, and thus results a poor lighting in the house. The height of the basement is of 2 metres, and that of the upper floor 2 - 2.5 metres. The portico, formed on the frontage and called «islak» (Greek: ἡλιακός), appears as a non-organic part, attached to the main body, although its roof is a part of the whole roof of the house. It is mainly used for the drying of fruits[1].

The need to house a large family, as e.g. the so-called zadruga, created a difficult problem which remained architecturally unsolved in the case of the Serbs and the other Slavs: the young people and the young couples sleep in separate small buildings (vajat, klijet, staja or koliba from the Greek καλύβη = hut) which are constructed alongside or around the family house (called kuc'a), having no hearth and being also used as a stable or a store house[2]. The number of klijeti existing round the kuc'a gives the number of couples living in that cluster[3]. As for the Bulgarians, this problem has been solved through the following two methods: 1. By the addition of rooms, in direct organic connection with the original region of the hearth. 2. By the unification of two independent bipartite or tripartite houses through covered entrances or corridors.

The first method is shown by the house in the village Zabel (Zlatev, fig. 16), one of the oldest houses in NW Bulgaria, which, «some

1) It is interesting to note the nomenclature of each part of the wooden bone in W. Bulgaria, which is often similar to that used in Thessaly and Epirus (Zlatev, p. 101, fig. 86) 1. Temel (θεμέλιον) = the basis of the post. 2. Direk = the post. 3. Gredi = (γρεντιά) beam. 4. Pope (παπᾶς = priest) (cf. **G. Megas**, Θεσσαλ. Οἰκήσεις p 20).

2) See **J. Cvijic'**, La Peninsule Balkanique, Paris, 1918, p. 233 and foll.

3) See **L. Niederle**, Manuel de l'antiquité Slave, Vol. 2 Paris 1926, p. 109.

9:Megas I, B-5,4 (no date) 1951 EH1 Greece EH1
Bulgaria EE1
Slavic Peoples E16

[The Bulgarian House of the Mountains]

In these two-storey houses as well, we distinguish in the upper-floor the two basic spaces just as in the Bulgarian house of the plains, namely the kăsta and the oda or soba with the so-called tsardak (or islak or soundourma) that is the open portico, in front of them. The lower storey is used, just as in the Greek houses, for the stabling of cattle and the storing of fruits, but very often it also includes a room with a hearth for the residence of the family during the winter. This is also called «kăsta» i.e. house, or even better, «lower house» and «small house» in contrast to the «upper», or «big house» that is the main room of the upper floor, where the family lives in the summer months.

The second room, called soba, is also used as sleeping quarter for the family, and more seldom for the storing of food and other articles. For this last purpose, another additional space is also used and is called «killer»; the upper floor is thus divided into three spaces (Plate XV).

This distribution is shown by the house of Sredna Gora (Messon Oros) which is very important as it exercised an influence upon the houses of Balkan, according to Zlatev (1). (See Fig. 43, 44 and Plate XV 1-2).

The portico in the upper floor is used, just as in the Greek houses, for the drying of fruit and as a living room of the family during the summer months. Parts of it are usually divided by light wooden or brick partitions, forming spaces called «ambar» (stores) for cereals, or even small rooms called «odaja» and «soba».

Finally, in some more composite forms of houses there is a space between the two main rooms, used as an anti-room, having the floor higher by 0.15-0.20 m. and called prust (Greek «μπροῦστι»); and also some other smaller spaces, divided off and used as hiding-places or cellars. In the more developed forms, such as in the houses of the village

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towns, even in their palaces. Slavs never used stone construction until the 10th cent., except for their Southern tribes who, having arrived in the Balkan peninsula and the Italian boundaries on the 6th cent., could see for themselves the models of Byzantine and Roman architecture». Stone construction was first used in the building of churches and of palaces by experts specially invited from abroad. Cf. **J. Cvijic'**, op. cit. pp. 228, 230, 241, **G. Megas**, Θρακ. Οἰκήσεις, p. 48.

1) According to **Cvijic**, op. cit. p. 250, «the house of Srendnja Gora is the one that corresponds better to the desires of all Bulgarian farmers, because it has spread all over the country after the Turkish occupation».

attached plan of such a house of the village of Dolna Mitropolia in the Plevna District of the year 1895 (fig. 50). 342

This consists of two underground galleries. The first and main gallery has, after the entrance, three spaces, meant for the housing of the family and of the cattle. The first is the anteroom (prust), the second is the stable (zemnik) and the third is the room (breg). The second gallery which is perpendicular to the first, comprises the house (kăsta) with the hearth and the cellar (called zadnik = back side). [231]

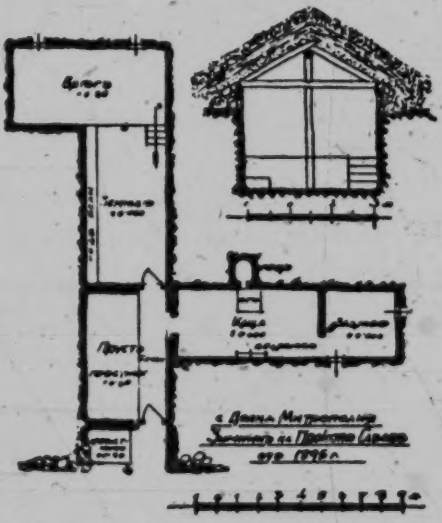

Fig. 50 Village Dolna Mitropolia. Trogle of Prokopi Savoff, 1895
(Zlatev, Bălg. Kăsta fig. 98)

The entrance, protected by the roof which is protruding, has, as a rule, an earthen plat-form (prastnik) where the inhabitants sit, or even sleep, in summer. [513]

After a slight slope of the ground, one goes through the entrance into the prust, which plays the role of an ante-room and which, in winter protects the inner spaces from the influence of the atmosphere and in summer, it is used for the habitation of the family, having for this purpose, an earthen sofa. Two doors open from the «prust» to the two main spaces of the house, the zemnik and the kăsta.

The zemnik is never less than 7 m. long and has mangers for the cattle on one side. After this room, one goes to the breg, that [231] [513] [354]

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342 has a floor higher by 0.80—0.90 than the rest, and is used as a
513 bedroom for the members of the family. No wall separates these two
354 spaces from each other, neither is there any provision for heating.

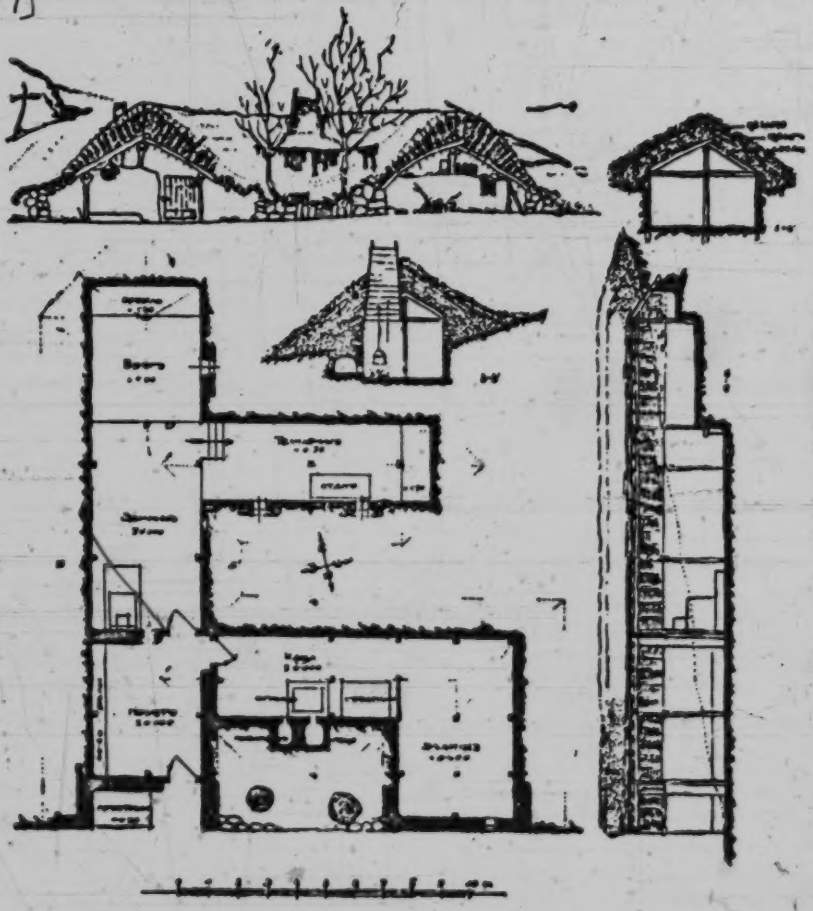

Fig. 51 Trogle of Pentso Tsoloff in the village Dolna Mitropolia, 1876
(Zlatev, Bălg. kăšte, fig. 97)

354 Instead of heating, the inhabitants keep warm by the heat omitted by
231 the cattle in the zemnik. For this reason, the male and female buffalo

Bulgaria EE1
Slavic Peoples E16

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are tied nearer the breg, for these animals emanate a lot of heat while feeding. One or two sky-lights are to be found on the roof of the breg and give some light to this very dark dug-out.

In the second gallery, as we have said, there is the main house. It has a fire-place, 2×2 m., with a wide chimney for the escape of the smoke. The bread is baked under the ash of this hearth and there is an opening near the fire-place for the collection of the ashes. Finally, the zadnik is the space behind the house, where food, agricultural products and other useful articles are kept (1).

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The same formation is seen in another lair of the same village, which was built in 1876 (Fig. 51.)

Dug-out houses existed from the ancient times among the Slavs, and other peoples of central and Nothern Europe, but, as it is shown by the remnants found, these dwellings constituted simple shelters (abris). That is to say, the Slavs dug out a deep trench, of more than one meter depth, which they covered with a roof of timbers, branches, hay and mud. According to Niederle «the construction of the house, or rather of the roof, was more or less simple, according to whether the stay in that place was to be of short duration; because the Slavs, used to live a nomadic life for a long time and till the beginnings of historic times». Such shelter-holes (fosses-abris) were already found in the Slav countries, of dimensions 1.50×4 meters, dating from the 8th, 9th and 10th centuries. Their construction has been retained, though on a less primitive shape, until the 19th century in some districts of Russia and Poland (2). The reason of such a form of housing is the lack of forests and of timber for construction of houses in the steppe districts.

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The troglodyte houses of Bulgaria prove of an evolution, obviously due to the influence exercised by surface houses; they are neither of Slav nor of Bulgarian origin. Ancient authors, such as Strabo VII, 5, 12, Plinius, Nat. Hist. IV, 80, Ptolemaeus (C. Müller, Ptolemaei Geographia I, 463), mention the «troglodytes» in the district of Little Skythia, now Dobroutcha, and in Dardania, who lived, like the Phrygians and the Armenians, in subterranean dwellings (3).

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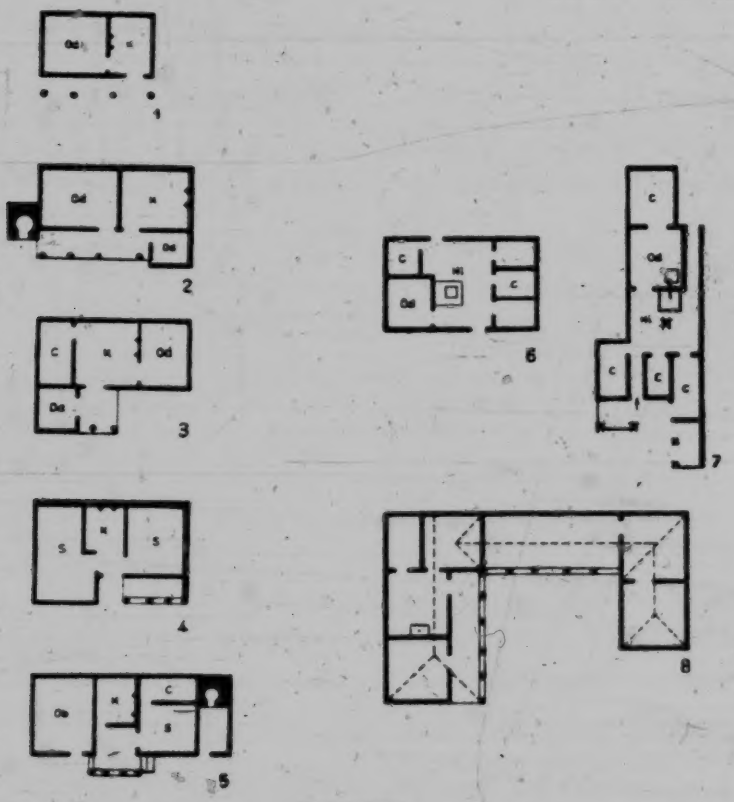
Consequently the Bulgars, and the Slavs who established them-

1) **T. Zlatev** op. cit. p. 112 figg. 97 98.
2) **L. Niederle,** op. cit. a p. 96 foll., 98.
3) See **C. Jirecek,** op. cit. 157. **G. Kazarow,** Beiträge zur Kulturgeschichte der Thraker, Sarajevo 1916, p. 30.

9:Megas I, B-5,4 (no date) 1951 EH1 Greece
Bulgaria EE1

342 BULGARIAN HOUSE PLATE XIII

TYPES OF WIDE FRONTED (OR ONE-STOREY) PLAIN HOUSE



MEMORANDUM

C cilier, cellar
Hi hiza, house, the main room
K kasta, house, the main room
Ob obór, stable
Od odaja, room
S oba, room with stove

[231]

[End Plate 13]

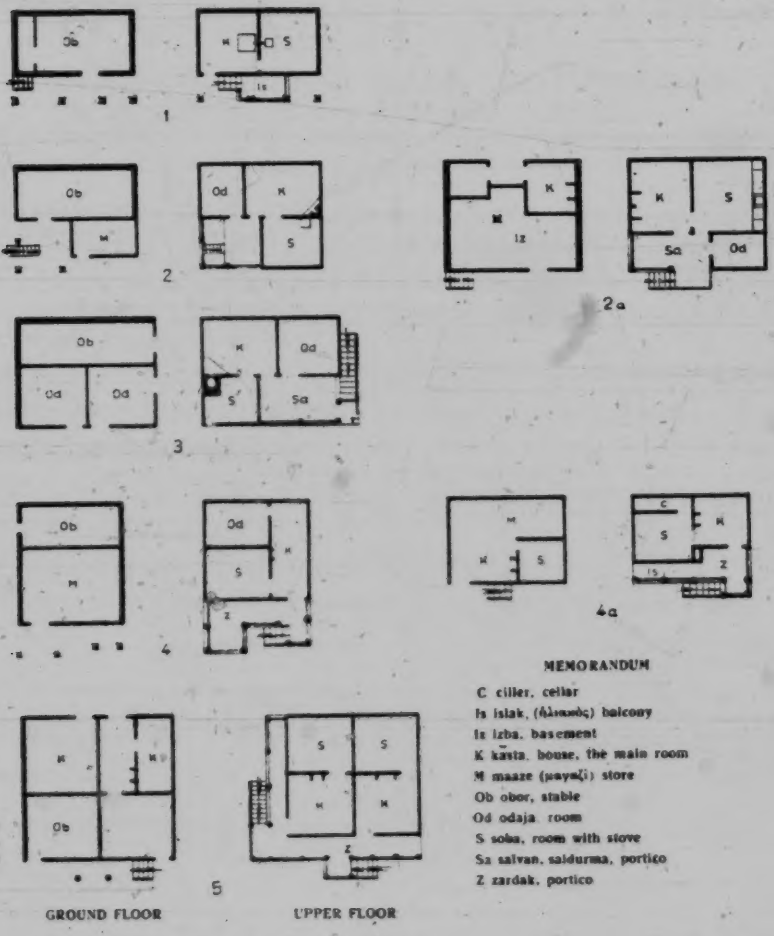
9:Megas I, B-5, 4 (no date) 1951 EH1 Greece

Bulgaria EE1

342 BULGARIAN HOUSE

PLATE XIV

TYPES OF MOUNTAINOUS (OR TWO STOREY) WIDE FRONTED HOUSE; ORIGINALLY TWO ROOMS ON THE UPPER FLOOR.



MEMORANDUM

C ciller, cellar
Is islak, (Almanç) balcony
Iz izba, basement
K kâsta, house, the main room
M maaze (μαγαζί) store
Ob obor, stable
Od odaja, room
S soba, room with stove
Sa salvan, saldurma, portico
Z zardak, portico

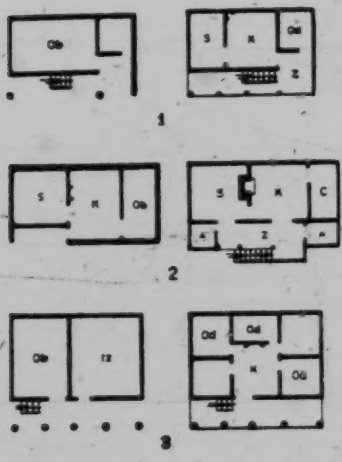
[231]

[End Plate 14]

9:Megas I, B-5, 4 (no date) 1951 EH1 Greece
Bulgaria EE1

BULGARIAN HOUSE PLATE XV 342

TYPES OF MOUNTAINOUS (OR TWO STOREY) WIDE FRONTED HOUSE, OF ORIGINALLY THREE ROOMS IN THE UPPER FLOOR.



GROUND FLOOR UPPER FLOOR

MEMORANDUM

A hambar, store
C ciller, cellar
Iz izba, basement
K kašta, house, room with hearth
Ki kioshk, kiosk
Ob obor, stable
Od odaja, room
P prust (popoćevi) portico
S soba, room with stove
Sa salvan, saldurma, portico
Sk skrivalishte, hiddenstore
Z zardak, portico

[231]

[End Plate 15]

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Yugoslavia EF1
Albania EG1
Rumania ED1
Bulgaria EE1
Slovenes EF7

/For information on the types of shelter provided for domesticated animals (including cattle), see scattered references in 17: Thurnher, EF6 Serbs file, category 116./